



Westfield

Local Heroes

2021

Westfield Local Heroes is a community recognition and awards program, designed to shine the spotlight on those people across Australia and New Zealand who make a positive impact to their local community and environment.

Individuals are nominated by their local communities, with the outcome of a public vote determining the three successful 2021 nominees for every Westfield centre.

Westfield Local Heroes

Now in its fourth year, we have awarded \$4.88 million to 489 community organisations.

Every year, we recognise more than 120 Westfield Local Heroes and provide more than \$1.2M in community grants to their affiliated organisations.

We congratulate all the 2021 nominees for being recognised by their communities and thank them for the important contribution they all make.



Westfield

St Lukes

NZ

Former teacher Deborah McLarin has helped stamp out bullying and truancy among thousands of marginalised school children since joining the Graeme Dingle Foundation in 2018.

Deborah was a teacher for 37 years but jumped at the opportunity to become the coordinator for the foundation's Kiwi Can programme, which combats antisocial behaviour, demotivation about education and lack of direction, which can place kids on a negative path later in life.

The early intervention program is delivered to 2167 tamaraki (children) in nine primary and intermediate schools located in areas of high social deprivation.

Every student is encouraged to participate. Team leaders teach them life skills and values while building their self-confidence and helping them learn to take responsibility for their actions.

Deborah is proud that the programme has led to significant

decreases in bullying, truancy and other behavioural issues.

She is widely admired for nurturing her staff to ensure they fulfil Kiwi Can's goal of helping kids overcome life's obstacles so they can reach their full potential.

Deborah says she feels incredibly humbled to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "Our programme works. Our kids have grown in strength and confidence, and that changes behaviour," she says.

Deborah's nominator says: "Deborah is a Westfield Local Hero because her dedication to helping tamaraki (children) reach their potential is building a stronger youth population. She is an absolute asset to education in Auckland."



Helping kids reach their potential

Deborah McLarin

Graeme Dingle Foundation Auckland

Dedicated, Humble, Nurturing

"Our programme works. Our kids have grown in strength and confidence, and that changes behaviour."



**Giving as
a way of life**

Sarah Page

Kindness Collective

Generous, Compassionate, Connector

"Being recognised is amazing as it will mean more people will see the work we do and get involved."

Marketing professional Sarah Page has harnessed the power of her community to brighten the lives of thousands of children and families since she founded the Kindness Collective.

Sarah's passion for giving started shortly after her son was diagnosed with autism. She realised she and her husband were incredibly privileged to have the means to pay for his support and decided to give back by seeking donations from friends and family for the community.

Her first project was to source food donations for a local women's refuge in 2014.

Over the next seven years, her charity has increased its repertoire, providing almost \$521,000 worth of food, clothing, baby essentials and financial assistance to vulnerable people. She also builds community projects, events and experiences and offers crisis support for whānau in need.

Sarah makes sure families get the Christmas they deserve by giving

presents to more than 3000 children as well as parties and food support.

Kindness Collective volunteers also rebuilt the women's refuge garden and the children's playground.

Sarah believes small actions from many people can have a big impact. She loves watching children at the refuge bouncing on their new trampoline and knowing families don't have to worry about school supplies.

She says it is wonderful to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "Being recognised is amazing as it will mean more people will see the work we do and get involved," she says.

Sarah's nominator says: "Sarah is a Westfield Local Hero because she haven't been paid for 7 years for the work she does for the Kindness Collective on top of her full-time job in marketing and tending to her family."

Hospital volunteer Nana Marie Jujnovich has spent 30 years at Heart Kids Auckland supporting families during their most challenging times.

Nana Marie is 85 but still spends every Tuesday and Thursday on the cardiology ward of the Starship Hospital, fulfilling the charity's aim of supporting families and children undergoing open-heart surgery or experiencing heart complications.

After cleaning and stocking the ward kitchen, she starts her rounds, checking in with every family and lighting up the mood in every room she enters.

When families are not up for conversation, she is a comforting presence, offering a hug or a hand to hold. Whenever possible, she is by their side when their children undergo procedures.

Nana Marie started with the charity after her grandson was born with congenital heart disease and has found sharing her own experience is a big help to families.

Her greatest reward is the opportunity to watch fragile babies grow into amazing adults. Sadly, her biggest challenge is bereavement support.

Nana Marie is proud to be nominated as a Westfield Local Hero. "I will always be there for the families. Little people and their parents need someone to talk who won't walk away when things get tough."

Nana's nominator says: "Nana Marie is a Westfield Local Hero because she has volunteered so much of her life to support families and children. She is a national treasure for her kindness, which lights up so many children's lives."



Healing nana hugs

(Nana) Marie Jujnovich

Heart Kids Auckland

Dedicated, Loving, Caring

"I will always be there for the families. Little people and their parents need someone to talk who won't walk away when things get tough."

Your 2021 Finalists



Miffy Barling

Youthline Auckland Charitable Trust

Miffy Barling found her calling with Youthline Auckland Charitable Trust, where she helps 200 volunteers support thousands of young people in crisis. Last year, her triage team responded to 150,000 calls for help from people aged 15–24. Miffy and the team refer the callers to the services they need to recover.



Jeanita Cush-Hunter

Children's Autism Foundation

Jeanita Cush-Hunter is a beacon of hope for desperate families who reach out to the Children's Autism Foundation for help to deal with their children's challenging behaviours. With her help, the kids grow in confidence and develop social skills. Jeanita also drives understanding of people with autism in the community.



Peter Leilua

Global Hope mission

Peter Leilua left a stable job to devote his days to helping troubled teens turn their lives around at Global Hope Mission. Peter has witnessed how disadvantaged young people become caught in the revolving door of the criminal justice system. He's determined to change the cycle and help young people contribute to their community. Peter was a Westfield Local Hero in 2019 and appreciates being nominated for a second time.

Recognising all of our 2021 nominees

Terry Toki
For the Boys Podcast

Tayla Nasmith
Mummys in Need

Charlie Cox
KOHA Apparel

Sarah Page
Kindness Collective

Julie Carter
One Big Family

Anna Kate Paterson
Everlasting.org.nz

Jeffrey Ruha
Rutherford College

Stuart Cross
Velvet Coffee Roasters

Tamara Waugh
**Auckland Sexual Abuse Help
Foundation**

Rylee Bracken
Raise Up (YMCA North)

Adam Sommerville
Speak NZ

Minha Kim
Victim Support Auckland West

Steve Campbell
Youth Search and Recue Trust

Kathy Neilson
Friends of Wairaki Stream

Sarah Christie
Pet Whisperer Rescue Trust

Deborah McLarin
**Graeme Dingle Foundation
Auckland**

Sandra Michelle Hickey
**Physical Disability
Rugby League NZ**

Charles Buenconsejo
Open Homes

Dominic Leverton
**Age Concern Auckland
Incorporated**

Miffy Barling
**Youthline Auckland
Charitable Trust**

Ally Gracewood
GirlGuiding New Zealand

Nana Marie (Jujnovich)
Heart Kids Auckland

Jeanita Cush-Hunter
Children's Autism Foundation

Peter Leilua
Global Hope Mission

**If you or anyone you know would like more information
on what support is available:**

AUSTRALIA

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

MensLine: 1300 78 99 78

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732

NEW ZEALAND

Lifeline: 0800 543 354

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865

Kidsline: 0800 54 37 54

Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757

Samaritans: 0800 726 666

Family Violence Information Line: 0800 456 450

The background features a large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping, rounded shapes in various shades of red and white. The shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

westfield.com.au/local-heroes

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SCENTRE GROUP